



*Washington
Department of*
**FISH and
WILDLIFE**

Lands 20/20: A Clear Vision For The Future

WDFW Lands Vision Oversight Group

**Public Review
DRAFT**

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Executive Summary

(To be developed)

Overview

Washingtonians' unique quality of life is inextricably linked to the diversity and accessibility of natural wonders so uniquely captured within our state's boundaries. From teeming shoreline or temperate rainforest, through broad grasslands or pine and fir forests, to looming plateaus or glaciated peaks, people from near and far enjoy the singular outdoor opportunities that Washington offers. Washington's diverse fish and wildlife and their habitats make a significant contribution to our quality of life through hunting, fishing, hiking, wildlife watching, and other forms of recreation, as well as through the economic benefit derived from these activities.

Lands Vision Initiative

Our understanding of fish and wildlife values, however, is dynamic, and is influenced by the patterns of land use, work, and travel of Washington's citizens. The Department of Fish and Wildlife's (Department) responsibility has grown beyond maintaining only hunting and fishing opportunities. Additionally, a multitude of federal, state, tribal, and local governments and non-profit organizations have entered the land management and acquisition arena in order to preserve all facets of ecological value and related opportunities. As society's expression of fish and wildlife values grows, and the number of entities who wish to preserve those values increases, it has become ever more important for the Department to clearly articulate its own overarching lands vision.

To this end, Dr. Jeff Koenings, Director of the Department of Fish and Wildlife, initiated an effort to convey the vision for agency lands. Dr. Koenings welcomed the contributions of senior management staff who, at a meeting in Yakima in September of 2003, affirmed the need to discuss the future of Department lands and the tools the agency uses to manage them. This initiative began with an interdisciplinary team of Department of Fish and Wildlife staff, who created a comprehensive list of policy and practice issues that needed resolution or clarification. The effort was then taken up by a smaller policy group that worked together and with external stakeholder input to craft a vision for agency lands.

Dr. Koenings and his staff further sought a vision that would communicate to the public the variety of land management strategies that the Department uses to achieve its goals. Land acquisition, where the Department of Fish and Wildlife pays for and owns the property, is one strategy among a host of other approaches. The agency's foremost expertise is in providing scientific information and analysis so that other entities can make informed land management choices to benefit fish and wildlife. In addition, many programs exist to provide incentives to private landowners to pursue conservation strategies on their land. The WDFW Landowner Incentive Program, for example, passes federal funding to private landowners to protect species at risk on their land. Cooperative agreements (which may include renting or leasing land) are also important tools for protecting fish and wildlife values. The Department enters into agreements with other governments, entities, or private landowners to carry out management activities on their lands that provide benefits to fish and wildlife. Often, local, state, or federal regulations provide sideboards to land use activities that confer important protections to fish and wildlife habitat. Finally, the Department may enter into land preservation agreements with other landowners. Here, the Department buys protection of fish and wildlife or habitats from the owner, who may continue to live on, and farm or ranch, the property. Describing the various land management strategies, articulating the Department's goals, and weaving the connections among goals, tools, and the future of agency lands are all part of the lands vision Dr. Koenings was looking for.

This report communicates that lands vision, as well as the attendant policy and decision-making framework. The vision statement connects the Department of Fish and Wildlife's land management and ownership to its legislative mandates and its strategic plan. Further, the report conveys the particular

ways in which maintaining public land helps the Department to meet those mandates. Explicit connections are made among the vision and policy goals, the tools the agency uses to identify land that supports fish and wildlife values and related opportunities, and the attributes the agency looks for in particular properties. Finally, this report presents a filter by which the Department can evaluate the degree to which both new and old properties contribute to the agency's vision and goals.

This report represents one prong in a "two-pronged" approach to managing the agency's lands. The guidance provided within this report should be thought of as a coarse filter for guiding and evaluating the relationship between lands and the agency's overall vision and goals. The Department also engages in many inter- and intra-agency planning processes, which provide a fine filter consistent with the lands vision and agency goals. In fact, lands that the Department owns and manages should be linked to the agency's strategic plan or to one of the plans or mitigation settlements that is consistent with agency goals and objectives.

These issue-specific plans (e.g. the Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy, salmon recovery plans, the Watchable Wildlife Strategy, a statewide game management plan, a species recovery plan, or a particular Wildlife Area Plan) are the second prong, and will continue to provide the detailed strategy and priorities for a specific property, issue, or species. The Department's dual mandate (to protect fish and wildlife and related recreational opportunities) implies the use of multiple, sometimes conflicting, management strategies. It is in the development of these issue-specific plans that Department of Fish and Wildlife staff can work together to reconcile management goals and land management approaches to best achieve the objectives for particular properties or wildlife areas.

Finally, the changeable nature of society's values necessitates the periodic review of the vision described in this document. The Department of Fish and Wildlife may need to revise the vision and goals for its lands to reflect changing activities, land use, or fish and wildlife values. In this way, the lands vision report is truly a living document, growing and changing to reflect the values and attitudes of the public the Department serves. Future review of this document is discussed in the Implementation chapter.

Land Management History

Voters and Legislatures throughout Washington's history have affirmed the contribution of Washington's diverse fish and wildlife to our unique quality of life by directing state agencies to protect and perpetuate our natural resources and the lands that sustain them. In our state's early history, the focus of the Department of Fisheries and the Department of Game (predecessors to the Department of Fish and Wildlife) was the protection and perpetuation of consumptive uses. As early as 1939, for instance, the Department of Game purchased property for the management of game and recreational hunting opportunities.

By the early 1970s, the Department of Game had acquired approximately 340,000 acres of land, largely to support game species and provide access to recreational hunting. Around this time, however, the former emphasis on protecting consumptive uses grew to include all wildlife species. The landmark Federal Endangered Species Act was passed in 1973, and represented the new outlook on wildlife, habitat, and nature. Between the years of 1971 and 1990, the Department's land acquisition was primarily the result of mitigation settlements with federal agencies and local entities.

The acquisition of wetlands in Western Washington was also an early focus of the Department of Game. These acquisitions were directed primarily at the restoration and protection of wetlands to benefit waterfowl and provide hunting access. A number of federal and state funding sources have supported (and continue to support today) the acquisition of wetlands in Washington. Among these are the Federal Migratory Bird Stamp Act (1934), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Coastal Wetlands Restoration Grant Program and North American Wetland Conservation Fund, Washington State's duck

stamp funds and Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account. This focus on wetland restoration and protection continues to be important for waterfowl and other wetland dependent species.

In the year 1990, Washington's management of fish and wildlife and related opportunities shifted yet again. The Legislature recognized the value of our state's fish and wildlife and outdoor recreation heritage and the threat that poorly planned development poses to these values. At the urging of the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Coalition, the Legislature created the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP). This program distributes money to state agencies and local government entities to permanently protect habitat and recreational lands across the state. The WWRP has enabled the Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) to acquire more than 70,000 acres of critical habitat to support the persistence of species such as Sharptail grouse, pygmy rabbits, and salmon. Protecting critical habitat assists species whose future is threatened by lost, converted, or fragmented habitat.

The Department of Wildlife (formerly, Game) and the Department of Fisheries merged in 1994, resulting in even more diverse land holdings. Fish hatcheries joined hundreds of fishing/boating access sites, game lands, mitigation settlement lands, and species protection lands under the umbrella of the newly formed agency. Additionally, the Department of Fish and Wildlife has forged numerous voluntary agreements with other government and private landowners to manage their lands for fish and wildlife conservation.

This acquisition history has left the Department of Fish and Wildlife with a collection of more than 800,000 acres under its ownership and management, and these lands are as diverse as the species and opportunities they support. These parcels may be only a few acres to protect an especially vulnerable population of an endangered species or provide public access for recreation. Alternately, the parcels may be large enough to support 12,000 elk on the winter range. They may be located on the arid east side, where some places consider ten inches of precipitation a "wet year", or located on an estuary along Washington's Coast, where salmon turn the corner to migrate upstream and wetlands support public duck hunting.

The Department currently owns more than 500,000 acres for the benefit of fish, wildlife, and access to hunting and fishing. The agency also provides benefits to fish, wildlife, and sportspeople by maintaining voluntary management agreements on more than 300,000 additional acres that are owned by other government and private landowners. The vast majority of WDFW lands are managed as part of individual wildlife areas. There are also more than 600 water access sites scattered throughout the state that are no more than a few acres in size. These lands reflect the Department of Fish and Wildlife's ongoing efforts to respond to society's changing fish and wildlife values – concern for game and non-game populations and recreational opportunity, responsibility to mitigation settlements, and (more recently) protection of critical habitat for vulnerable populations.

We owe much to early Washingtonians, whose foresight preserved valuable game and rangelands and assured that the fish and wildlife related activities they knew then would be available to us today. The specific goals for our lands have grown since the 1930s, but the general purpose of our lands has not. The Department owns and manages lands to further its legislative mandates related to sound stewardship of fish and wildlife and related opportunities. In so doing, the Department of Fish and Wildlife maintains for future generations the fish and wildlife values we enjoy today.

The Lands Vision

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife is governed by a dual mandate, and these twin goals work hand in hand to ensure sustainable fish and wildlife populations and wildlife-related opportunities. The Legislature clearly directs the Department to “preserve, protect, perpetuate, and manage” the fish and wildlife species of the state as its paramount responsibility (RCW 77.04.012). At the same time, the Department must continue to maximize opportunities to hunt, fish, and appreciate fish and wildlife, consistent with that paramount responsibility (RCWs 77.04.012 and 77.04.020). The Department’s lands vision embraces the Legislature’s direction, and affirms the contribution agency owned lands can make toward sustaining this direction into the future.

Vision Statement

***Lands 20/20: A Clear Vision For The Future.** Protecting our unique quality of life by maintaining a citizen-supported portfolio of lands to sustain Washington’s diverse fish and wildlife and their habitats into the next century.*

The Future

The Department of Fish and Wildlife’s constituents include current and future generations, and the vision statement acknowledges the Department’s long-term planning horizon. Just as the Department of Game acted early in the twentieth century to preserve hunting opportunities for today’s public, so too does the Department of Fish and Wildlife act to preserve *today’s* fish, wildlife, and related opportunities into the next century.

Our Unique Quality of Life

The lifestyle that Washingtonians enjoy is unique and irreplaceable. The diversity of fish and wildlife related activities that are available to us are unprecedented, and attracts businesses and workers from around the country. The Department of Fish and Wildlife’s stewardship responsibility reflects Washington’s heritage, and includes maintaining sustainable hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, and other wildlife-compatible opportunities. For some, simply knowing that healthy fish and wildlife populations exist contributes to their quality of life, and the Department’s work supports this value as well. Protected lands also contribute to our quality of life indirectly, by protecting and enhancing ground water supplies and air quality.

A Citizen-Supported Portfolio of Lands

There are myriad ways in which the land itself can contribute toward preserving, protecting, perpetuating, and managing Washington’s fish and wildlife and the opportunities associated with them. The Department of Fish and Wildlife’s citizen-supported portfolio of lands is an *investment* in the future of these values in Washington State. The Department seeks to garner the support of Washington citizens by maintaining lands that reflect current fish and wildlife values and provide opportunities consistent with those values. The Department diversifies its lands portfolio by making use of many of the numerous land management strategies discussed above. The Department’s most important land management approach is to provide the science-based tools and assessments that help other agencies and organizations designate land management and acquisition priorities. Another strategy the Department uses is to guide the management of lands owned by other state, federal, and local governments in order to maximize the fish and wildlife values or recreational opportunities. The Department of Fish and Wildlife also enters into voluntary agreements with other landowners to actively manage their lands for fish and wildlife related values. Additionally, the agency establishes leases, easements, or other cooperative agreements with private landowners for public hunting and fishing access and/or habitat

restoration or conservation. Finally, the Department of Fish and Wildlife acquires land to secure fishing and hunting access sites and to protect land for the conservation of fish and wildlife species and biodiversity¹.

Washington's Diverse Fish and Wildlife and Their Habitats

The Department of Fish and Wildlife is a steward for the persistence of Washington's diverse fish and wildlife that are, in turn, an integral part of the overall biodiversity of our state. The Department of Fish and Wildlife adopts a species-scale approach to biodiversity by managing and protecting land for the continued persistence of threatened and endangered fish and wildlife species. The Department also takes a proactive, landscape-scale approach to biodiversity by managing and protecting many habitat types to the benefit of rare, common, threatened, and abundant species alike. By considering biodiversity on these two scales, the Department of Fish and Wildlife can contribute to the recovery of fish and wildlife species that are already declining and to the prevention of future species declines.

Agency Goals

The aspirations articulated in the vision statement can be recast as simple goals: benefits to fish and wildlife, benefits to the public, and operational excellence. The goals are easy to understand, originate from the Department's Strategic Plan, and encompass the responsibilities implicit in the vision statement. These goals, discussed in subsequent sections, are the first step toward relating the broad vision for the lands portfolio to the day-to-day business of the Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Agency Needs

In order to achieve the agency's goals, properties within the lands portfolio must contribute to a particular set of needs. To achieve the goal of benefiting fish and wildlife, the Department needs lands that contribute value to species, habitats, and biodiversity. Lands assist the Department of Fish and Wildlife in providing benefits to the public by offering available and accessible opportunities to enjoy fish and wildlife related activities, by contributing to scientific knowledge, and by benefiting economies. In order to deliver all of its services with operational excellence, the Department needs to manage its lands portfolio by maintaining fiscal accountability, a strong stewardship ethic, and viable partnerships. These needs will be discussed in more details in subsequent sections of this report.

¹ "Biodiversity is defined by the Washington Biodiversity Conservation Committee as 'the full range of life in all its forms.'" Excerpted from: Washington Biodiversity Conservation Committee. *Washington Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Report: Making the Connections. Report to the Washington State Legislature, October 2003.*

Benefits to Fish and Wildlife

Our Vision for the Future: Basic needs, including key habitats, will be understood for species at risk; Wildlife-accessible habitats will exist that are sufficient to sustain species at risk, keep common species common, and assure adequate game populations; Each of the habitat types in Washington State² will have sufficient acreage under some form of protection to assure properly functioning habitat.

The Department of Fish and Wildlife's mission is to preserve, protect, perpetuate, and manage Washington's fish and wildlife species and the biodiversity they represent. The land itself is a key to achieving this mission: it benefits fish and wildlife directly by providing habitat and species biodiversity, and indirectly by providing a stage for landscape processes and functions to operate. The Department seeks lands with intrinsic value to all of Washington's fish and wildlife species. For some species, the Department seeks functions provided by natural landscapes (those with native plant communities and functioning landscape processes), while other species need lands that are actively managed for a particular function. A combination of these two approaches is the best avenue by which to bolster declining populations, maintain game populations, and protect existing biodiversity.

But the agency pursues this land management strategy in a changing landscape. Our patterns of land use, work, and travel continue to alter the land, causing a lands portfolio that sustains fish and wildlife to be a moving target. How can we keep this moving target within our sight? The concept of optimal conservation 'reserve networks' that identify a collection of properties to be conserved for ecosystem benefit (particularly biodiversity) has been thought an effective conservation tool. Recent research³, however, indicates that such networks may only optimize conservation goals and expenditures when the property protections are implemented all at once. Properties usually must be purchased over long periods of time, however, and such comprehensive planning solutions may not continue to be 'optimal' in the face of changing prices, land use, and biological function. In fact, simple rules, such as choosing lands with the highest species richness or the most irreplaceable biological value, can be more effective over time².

This research supports the approach the Department of Fish and Wildlife takes to provide benefits to fish and wildlife. The specific contributions of our lands portfolio toward fish, wildlife, and biodiversity are the result of management and acquisition choices that adhere to some general principles, as well as to some of the specific priorities and recommendations established in more detailed planning processes. This section discusses some of the general principles that guide additions to the lands portfolio, the major plans that provide important detail and, finally, some steps the Department wishes to take in the future to assure further benefit to fish and wildlife.

Species

The most straightforward way to assure that the lands portfolio provides benefits to fish and wildlife is to focus on the fish and wildlife themselves. The Department of Fish and Wildlife uses the presence of key habitat for focal species as one indication of the land's value. Key habitat is habitat that is critical for one or more of a species' life stages. This may include breeding grounds, rearing habitat, or overwintering lands. A focus on declining species and populations, as well as animals that are of local

² Johnson, David H. and Thomas A. O'Neil, Managing Directors. *Wildlife-Habitat Relationships in Oregon and Washington*. Oregon State University Press, Corvallis: 2001.

³ Meir, Eli; Andelman, Sandy; and Hugh P. Possingham. "Does conservation planning matter in a dynamic and uncertain world?" *Ecology Letter*, (2004) 7: 615-622.

concern, acts as a species-scale filter for Washington's biodiversity. It is in this way that the Department works to assure that no species is eliminated from the state.

In identifying lands that will best benefit focal fish and wildlife species, the Department considers several factors. Foremost, the agency seeks to protect key habitats that are "irreplaceable". These are habitats that provide benefits to the species that cannot be provided anywhere else in the state. These areas are often "lasts": the last mating grounds in the state, the last nesting grounds in the state, or the last lake that harbors any population at all. Animals that are present on the federal list of threatened and endangered species are also a high priority, followed closely by the Department of Fish and Wildlife's list of threatened and endangered species. The Department also looks to the federal and state lists of candidate species, or species of concern, which indicate fish and wildlife populations that are likely to become threatened in the future. Finally, populations that are locally important, or are identified as "target species" in an ecoregional assessment, are considered. Keystone species also deserve special consideration, because they serve as a critical link in the nutrient cycle of an ecosystem. Certain fish and wildlife have a special significance for communities and regions across the state, independent of their status on a federal or state list, and the Department of Fish and Wildlife recognizes the value of this significance.

Tools⁴

Current tools to aid in identifying key habitats for species include single- and multiple-species recovery plans, the Department's Priority Habitats and Species database, the agency's SalmonScape on-line mapping database, modeling tools such as Ecosystem Diagnostics and Treatment, Columbia River Basin subbasin plans, and local habitat assessments. Management plans for individual Wildlife Areas may also identify adjacent or nearby key habitats for important species. Other plans, such as Shorebird Conservation Plans, Neotropical Bird Conservation Plans, and game management plans direct actions to conserve or manage groups of animals or particular populations. A future tool for assisting the Department in its species-scale endeavors is the State Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy. This plan is being produced in order to maintain eligibility for federal Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Program funds, and integrates existing inventory and planning efforts. It will help to define the lands portfolio and benefits to fish and wildlife by identifying species and habitats that are most in need of conservation. This strategy will be completed in October of 2005.

Habitats

In addition to managing lands for focal species, the Department of Fish and Wildlife's lands portfolio provides substantial benefits to multiple fish and wildlife species by including lands that provide a variety of ecological functions. Some lands harbor the ecosystem processes that help adjacent lands to remain healthy and functional. Often, the Department conducts restoration on its lands to repair the processes and structures that historically existed on the landscape. Other lands are actively managed to provide particular, valuable functions, such as habitat for an endangered species or winter forage for valuable game populations. Whether the lands have been unaffected by development or need some restoration or management, habitat functions are the backbone of the lands portfolio, benefiting robust and declining populations alike.

Lands in the lands portfolio exhibit a number of ecological functions. Ecological connectivity is important, and assures that water, nutrients, and the fish and wildlife themselves can be distributed across the landscape. They include ecosystem processes, like delivery of water and sediments, and

⁴ The "Tools" sections included throughout this document are not intended to be comprehensive lists of all the relevant tools and plans that the Department of Fish and Wildlife invests or engages in. Rather, the "Tools" sections capture some of the key tools and plans that guide the Department's efforts.

exhibit healthy function, such as providing groundwater recharge. These lands contribute to the integrity of the landscape around them, supporting existing protected lands or adding a core of high value habitat to surrounding land of moderate value. Such healthy lands protect a migratory route, or offer a corridor that connects two larger habitat areas, preventing lands from become isolated and less functional.

Another aspect of the Department's lands portfolio is managing habitat to perpetuate game species for the maintenance of hunting, fishing, and other harvesting opportunities. These species may not be threatened or endangered, but the maintenance of healthy populations of harvestable species – from mule deer to shellfish – underpins all opportunities to hunt, fish, and harvest. Consequently, the Department includes within its portfolio lands that function to support key habitat for those harvestable species.

The Department of Fish and Wildlife does not seek to own all the lands in the state that provide benefits to fish and wildlife. There are many such lands that are protected by local land regulations, by other conservation agencies or entities, and by conscientious landowners. Therefore, the Department protects lands that would otherwise face some sort of risk (like changing regulations or changing ownership) that would eliminate the land's fish and wildlife values. It is the role of the Department of Fish and Wildlife to provide a last line of defense against the loss of critical habitat, or an individual species.

Tools

Many tools exist to assist the Department in identifying habitats that meet the criteria discussed above. As mentioned, the State Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy, to be completed in October of 2005, will identify species and habitats of the highest conservation need. Individual species recovery plans may make recommendations regarding the ecosystem functions of lands, as may particular mitigation settlements. Subbasin plans and ecoregional assessments also provide direction regarding lands that help support healthy populations, ecosystem processes, and functions. For lands within the Department of Fish and Wildlife lands portfolio, individual Wildlife Area Management Plans describe the actions that must be taken to achieve and maintain particular functions on lands that are managed to benefit fish and wildlife. Some statutes provide guidance regarding the management of public lands. RCW 79.13.620, for example, directs the Department of Fish and Wildlife to achieve certain ecosystem standards on those of its lands that are managed for agricultural or grazing objectives.

Biodiversity

While the Department of Fish and Wildlife's responsibility for responding to the decline of specific species and populations will remain for the foreseeable future, the agency is increasingly taking *proactive* measures to protect and preserve fish and wildlife by focusing on Washington's biodiversity. The Department participated in the production of the 2003 *Washington Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Report*, and is working to integrate the strategy recommendations into its business wherever possible. The Strategy's recommendation number five is of particular importance to the agency's lands portfolio: *Improve efforts to conserve biodiversity on public lands*. The focus on biodiversity in the lands portfolio is carried out at a landscape scale – the protection of many habitat types benefits rare, common, threatened, and abundant species alike.

The biodiversity component of the lands portfolio is effective because it includes lands that have high conservation value (as indicated by biological measures) and are vulnerable (face some risk to their current biodiversity value). This comparison between biodiversity conservation value and vulnerability is one of the powerful tools that Washington's ecoregional assessments have produced. These assessments, produced through collaboration of the Department of Fish and Wildlife, The Nature Conservancy, and the Washington Department of Natural Resources, assess the biodiversity and conservation potential of lands across the nine ecoregions of Washington State. The ecoregional assessments provide a land evaluation that presents the relative conservation value and vulnerability of lands across each ecoregion. The lands of highest value to the Department are those that exhibit the highest priority conservation value and highest priority vulnerability. Of subsequent value are those lands that exhibit some combination of first and second priority conservation value and vulnerability. Succeeding combinations of conservation value and vulnerability can be prioritized according to Figure 1. Each of the eight ecoregional assessments that cover the nine ecoregions of the state will be completed by the year 2006.

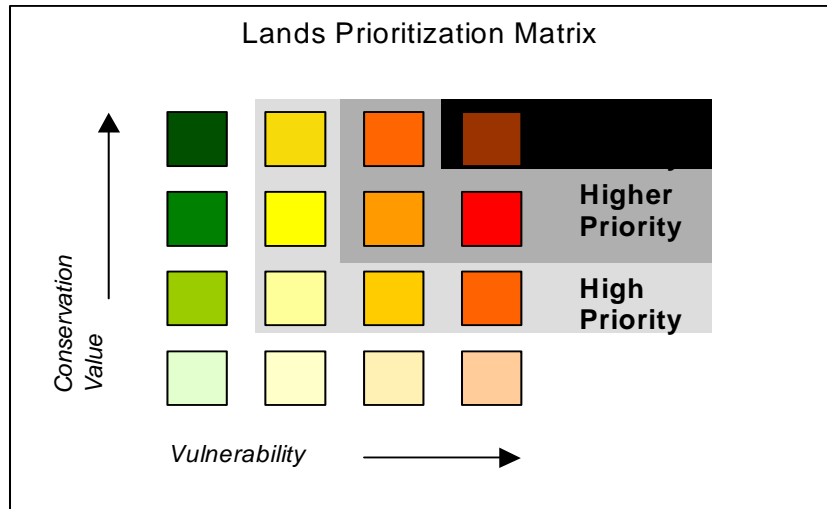


Figure 1.

Where ecoregional assessments have yet to be finished, or for assessing freshwater and nearshore marine systems, other variables can be used as surrogates for the conservation value/vulnerability comparison discussed above. Biological measures such as species richness and complexity of habitats can be used as a surrogate to evaluate the biodiversity conservation value of land. Species richness measures the number of different fish and wildlife species types that inhabit the land. Complexity of habitats measures the number of habitat types encompassed within a given area. As discussed above, a risk is any factor that endangers the current biodiversity value of the land. Risk may, for example, take the form of changing land use regulations, changing ownership, or the end of a short-term conservation easement.

Tools

Additional tools and assessments exist that can help identify biodiversity values of lands. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's Priority Habitats and Species (PHS) provides information about habitat and species associations, and makes some land management recommendations. *Wildlife – Habitat Relationships in Oregon and Washington*⁵, by David H. Johnson and Thomas A. O'Neil provides invaluable information regarding the relationships between species and their habitats. The Washington Biodiversity Council began meeting in the fall of 2004, and is implementing the number one recommendation of the *Washington Biodiversity Conservation Strategy*

⁵ Johnson, David H. and Thomas A. O'Neil, Managing Directors. *Wildlife-Habitat Relationships in Oregon and Washington*. Oregon State University Press, Corvallis: 2001.

*Report*⁶: developing a statewide biodiversity strategy. When completed, this strategy will guide the biodiversity conservation efforts of the Department of Fish and Wildlife and other agencies.

How Much Is Enough?

The landscape across which we attempt to protect and manage fish and wildlife and biodiversity is, as mentioned, constantly changing. Though the science underpinning our understanding of species and habitat relationships is always progressing, leading to better and more effective protection and management decisions, we have not yet achieved a scientific understanding of how much land must be conserved to ensure the future persistence of the state's fish, wildlife, and biodiversity.

It is possible, however, to compare information about the habitat types that historically covered Washington's landscape with the habitat types that currently cover our landscape. From this comparison, we can see the percent of historic coverage that remains today, and we can determine what portion of today's coverage (as well as what percent of the historic coverage) is already conserved and protected. If we could determine the percent of the historic coverage we should "aim" to protect, we could compare this goal to the lands currently protected and see the "gap" in conservation.

Setting a numerical goal, however, of percent of historic habitat coverage, is not a scientific endeavor. While the Department of Fish and Wildlife has taken the lead in furthering fish and wildlife science and producing fish and wildlife related tools and assessments, no one state agency can set such policy-dependent goals for species and habitat protection. Such goals represent socio-political and economic choices, and must be the result of collaborative discussions and decision-making.

The Legislature anticipated the need for such a collaborative process with the passage of Substitute Senate Bill 6242 (SSB 6242 or 6242). This bill directs the Interagency Committee to conduct an assessment of the current state of our public lands, and then lead a collaborative discussion among state agencies and other entities to produce a statewide land strategy. It is in this arena that the Department of Fish and Wildlife can engage with other state agencies and entities to decide upon an appropriate quantitative goal, the distribution of roles and responsibilities with regard to those goals, as well as the process for revising the goals to reflect our ever-increasing understanding of species and the habitats they live in.

⁶ Washington Biodiversity Conservation Committee. *Washington Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Report: Making the Connections. Report to the Washington State Legislature, October 2003.*

Benefits to the Public

Our Vision for the Future: All Washington citizens will have an opportunity to access and appreciate this state's fish and wildlife; Availability and access to fish and wildlife related opportunities will increase consistently with demand; All Washingtonians will have opportunity for a fish and wildlife educational experience; To the greatest extent practicable, agency lands will present a direct or indirect economic benefit to the local or state economy.

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife is not only accountable to the protection of the fish, wildlife, and biodiversity of the state, but to the protection of citizens' ability to access and learn from these natural resources. It is the right of every citizen of the state to access and appreciate the fish, wildlife, and biodiversity that so uniquely contribute to our quality of life. The mission that the Department of Game initiated with the acquisition of mule deer habitat in 1939 is continued today – continued and expanded to encompass the breadth of fish and wildlife related activities that people now enjoy. These activities include hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing opportunities such as bird watching, photography, and beach combing. The Department's management and protection of lands to benefit fish and wildlife presents other unique opportunities to the citizenry – opportunities for learning and discovery.

These natural landscapes offer other benefits to the public: the environmental benefits produced by healthy, functioning landscapes. Such landscapes not only preserve and enhance fish and wildlife values, but enhance water and air quality. Healthy soils and plant communities filter groundwater, reduce flooding, store excess carbon from the atmosphere, and release oxygen into the air. These “fringe benefits” contribute to the quality of life at the local, regional, and state levels. Invariably, the positive environmental effects of conserving healthy habitat surpass the specific goals of the entity that owns and manages the land. The purpose of the Department of Fish and Wildlife lands vision report is, however, to relay the vision that connects the lands portfolio to the Department's mission and goals. Therefore, some of the “central benefits” earned from the Department's lands portfolio, including access to fish and wildlife related activities and learning opportunities, will be discussed in this section.

Availability and Accessibility

The Department of Fish and Wildlife's commitment to the availability and accessibility of fish and wildlife related recreation is demonstrated by its long-standing relationship with hunters, fishers, and wildlife enthusiasts of all kinds. While the Department has particular regulatory authorities over hunting and fishing, it has also invested resources and expertise in developing and maintaining availability of, and access to, a wide variety of activities on its lands.

The Department seeks to maintain the availability and access to high quality opportunities. For hunting and fishing, a high quality opportunity is legally and physically accessible, offers few or no restrictions, gives access to many types of fish and game, and is on a physical scale that leaves each sportsman plenty of room to ply their craft.

A high quality wildlife viewing opportunity is also legally and physically accessible, and offers a unique viewing opportunity such as a migration corridor, wintering area, or area of high biodiversity. The Department also facilitates availability and accessibility of wildlife related opportunities by partnering with private landowners to gain access for public hunting, fishing, and viewing opportunities. These access agreements are an innovative aspect of the agency's lands portfolio. Though they are not the specific responsibility of the Department of Fish and Wildlife, other activities (like boating, hiking,

kayaking, running or camping) can be significant benefits to the public when they are consistent with the fish and wildlife management objectives of the land.

As stated above, the Department of Fish and Wildlife does not intend to own or manage all the lands that provide value to fish and wildlife and related opportunities. National, state and local parks; other federal lands; and even private parks or access opportunities offer significant fish and wildlife related activities. The Department does not seek to own or manage lands that are already preserved for their recreational value. Thus, the Department will consider whether the fish and wildlife related opportunities offered by a piece of land are at risk, and can only be retained through agency ownership or management.

Tools

Our understanding of fish and wildlife related opportunities is not a scientific one. There are no tools to assess fish and wildlife related opportunity that are analogous to those we use to assess benefits to fish and wildlife. Our understanding is, rather, based upon demographics, economics, and the needs expressed by our constituencies. In this regard, the many advisory councils that provide feedback to the Department are invaluable. The Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development produced in 2004 a report titled *Wildlife Viewing Activities in Washington: A Strategic Plan*⁷. This plan includes specific recommendations for new Department of Fish and Wildlife initiatives that would enhance the number and quality of wildlife viewing opportunities in the state.

Also in 2004, the Department of Fish and Wildlife produced a *Habitat Conservation and Recreation Plan 2004 – 2010*⁸ that identifies the status of recreational access to its lands, as well as the general needs for recreational access on agency property. The Office of the Interagency Committee produced a plan more general in scope: *An Assessment of Outdoor Recreation in Washington State*⁹. Within this plan, the Office of the Interagency Committee provides some general recommendations to the Department of Fish and Wildlife to augment and improve recreational access on its lands. Each of these tools can help to identify ways to improve the availability and accessibility of hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, and other recreational opportunities on the Department's lands.

Knowledge

The pursuit of knowledge is an important aspect of the Department's lands portfolio, and is only one of the many benefits the public can expect from state lands. The contributions that agency lands can make toward furthering research and environmental education are tremendous. Most Department of Fish and Wildlife lands are accessible and host innumerable species and diverse habitats, and present opportunities such as researching predator-prey interactions, monitoring population dynamics, or giving schoolchildren opportunities to observe wild salmon spawning. Because the Department preserves and manages many of its lands in their native state, these lands are not just protecting today's fish and wildlife values and related opportunities. These lands are protecting a functioning piece of Washington's natural landscape. They present a chance to monitor the natural world and learn about the effects our choices have on the environment.

⁷ Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and Washington Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development. *Wildlife Viewing Activities in Washington: A Strategic Plan. Report to the Washington State Legislature, March 2004.*

⁸ Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. *Habitat Conservation and Recreation Plan 2004 – 2010. Submitted to the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation, June 2004.*

⁹ Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation. *An Assessment of Outdoor Recreation in Washington State: A State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Planning [SCORP] Document 2002-2007. October 2002.*

The Department of Fish and Wildlife embraces opportunities for its lands to be used to further knowledge and understanding. This can be achieved through the implementation on agency lands of research and monitoring plans. Lands within the portfolio also offer physical spaces in which to carry out environmental lessons and programs. The Department has a strong commitment to delivering scientific studies and assessments, and this commitment is bolstered by a staunch belief in the value of environmental education for citizens of all ages.

Tools

Countless resources exist to assist in identifying and implementing research, monitoring, and environmental education plans. Researchers from universities and colleges often conduct research projects that examine the particulars of fish, wildlife, habitats, or combinations thereof. Staff from Department of Fish and Wildlife regions statewide use Department lands to conduct research and monitoring. Department lands may also support research and monitoring gaps identified in species recovery plans and subbasin plans. The *Report Card on the Status of Environmental Education in Washington State*¹⁰ explains the educational benefits to be derived from environmental education and contains succinct recommendations for improving the support for, and use of, environmental curriculum. The Pacific Education Institute is a complementary effort. It is a public-private partnership, supported by the Department of Fish and Wildlife and many other entities, that offers support to teachers in integrating the natural and social sciences into their curricula. All of these resources can provide possibilities for creating linkages between the Department's lands and research or environmental education.

Economics

In addition to the access and knowledge benefits that accrue to the public, Department of Fish and Wildlife lands provide substantial economic benefits to local governments, tribes, and local enterprise¹¹. The Department seeks to avoid causing negative impacts to the economies of surrounding areas, and instead seeks to maintain and enhance the positive economic impacts to be derived from agency owned and managed lands¹².

The Department contributes directly to county government through payments in lieu of taxes (PILT) or fines from game violations, and land assessments. The Department of Fish and Wildlife is the only state agency to contribute directly to local economies through payments in lieu of taxes. For Department owned areas in excess of 100 acres, county governments can elect to receive an amount equal to that currently paid on similar parcels of open space land, or choose the greater of \$.70 per acre or the per acre amount paid in 1984. . Alternately, the county government may choose to receive any fines or forfeitures on game violations that are prosecuted within the county. Revenues from fines vary wildly depending on the number and seriousness of the infractions written in that area. In any case, it is incumbent upon the county to choose whether PILT or game violation fines best meets their needs. The Department also provides payments for service assessments (e.g. fire protection, weed control, or irrigation) conducted by the county on agency owned and managed lands.

¹⁰ Audubon Washington. 2004. *Report Card on the Status of Environmental Education in Washington State*. As requested by the Washington State Legislature.

¹¹ For a discussion of the benefits local economies derive from Department of Fish and Wildlife lands, see *Adding It Up*. Published by the Department of Fish and Wildlife in December, 2002. It is available online at http://wdfw.wa.gov/pubaffrs/adding_it_up.htm

¹² For a discussion on the economic impacts of Department lands, see: McKeever/Morris, Inc. and ECO Northwest. *Social and Economic Evaluation of the Washington State Wildlife Habitat Acquisition Program: A Final Report*. Prepared for Washington State Department of Wildlife on February 18, 1993.

Department of Fish and Wildlife lands contribute indirectly to state and local economies by providing a draw for tourism in the surrounding area. Tourism from hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing is a major revenue source for Washington businesses, and federal and state public lands provide the primary means for pursuing these activities. In 2001 alone, 3 million state residents and nonresidents spent \$2.4 billion dollars in Washington on wildlife related recreation¹³, which includes the activities of hunters, anglers, and wildlife-watchers (i.e. observing, feeding, and photographing). This is a significant contribution to both state and local economies, and supports businesses from sporting goods stores, to hotels and motels, to gas stations.

Department of Fish and Wildlife lands are attractive to other sorts of recreationists, as well. Some lands in the lands portfolio accommodate boating, walking, hiking, picnicking, camping, mountain biking, and even hang gliding, just to name a few activities. While the economic contribution of these forms of recreation hasn't been quantified, they provide revenue to businesses that are similar to the types that benefit from wildlife-related activities.

Tools

A number of tools and plans exist to help ascertain the direct and indirect economic benefits to be derived from the Department of Fish and Wildlife lands portfolio. The Department's own records regarding payments in lieu of taxes, as well as assessment payments, record direct contributions of the agency to county governments. The Sonoran Institute's presentation of census data for Western states and counties is another important tool¹⁴. This database presents comparisons of census data for non-metropolitan counties in the Western states in an effort to help describe the changing economy of the West, and aid in the pursuit of conservation values and economic vitality. Another valuable tool is the *National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation*. This is a long-running and respected survey effort, and Washington's portion reveals valuable information about the economic contribution of wildlife-related activities. Records and surveys from the local level should be consulted and included when evaluating the potential impact of the Department's lands portfolio on local governments, tribes, and enterprise.

¹³ U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Department of Commerce. U.S. Census Bureau. 2001 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation.

¹⁴ See the Sonoran Institute's SocioEconomics Program home page at www.sonoran.org/programs/si_se_program_main.html. See also the following summary publication: Rasker, Ray; Alexander, Ben; van den Noort, Jeff; and Rebecca Carter. *Prosperity in the 21st Century West: The Role of Protected Public Lands*. A Publication of the Sonoran Institute, July 2004.

Operational Excellence

Our Vision for the Future: Local interests and perspectives will be solicited and accommodated to the greatest extent possible for all proposed WDFW acquisitions; In addition to fee-simple acquisition by WDFW, management alternatives such as land preservation agreements, management agreements, and partnerships will be evaluated for all proposed agency acquisitions; WDFW identifies and aggressively pursues funding sources to support operations and maintenance for all agency lands, and to manage those lands for ecological health; All potential WDFW lands acquisitions are evaluated based on their contribution towards the conservation of fish and wildlife and the provision of fish and wildlife related opportunities for the public.

With the Department of Fish and Wildlife's ownership and management of a diverse lands portfolio comes a burden of responsibility to the public. This burden requires the Department to remain fiscally accountable for its decisions and to practice sound stewardship of its lands. The Department also seeks to be accountable to the public through partnerships with other agencies, entities, and with the public at large. Not only does this represent efficient government, it represents government that keeps its finger on the pulse of the public it serves. All of these challenges are facets of the Department of Fish and Wildlife's commitment to practice operational excellence in all that it does. The agency's strategic plan provides important guidance toward achieving and maintaining operational excellence because, as it indicates, "Operational and service excellence are critical to building and maintaining credibility." This portion of the lands vision report details this commitment to practice operational excellence, and suggests some of the tools available to further the commitment.

Fiscal Accountability

The Department of Fish and Wildlife's work is funded by taxpayer contributions and by the purchase of hunting and fishing licenses, and the agency strives to manage these funds responsibly in order to remain true to the expectations of the public. This is certainly true in the case of the Department's lands portfolio. One way to remain accountable is to assure that the appropriate land management strategy is being used. Non-ownership strategies such as providing the science tools for others, managing land for another owner, or establishing a cooperative agreement with a private landowner offer ways to maintain the goals of the lands portfolio. Land ownership (fee-simple acquisition) is another strategy that the Department may employ to maintain fish and wildlife values and related opportunities. It is important to provide an explanation of why a particular land management strategy was utilized over another.

Another component of fiscal accountability is to plan for the maintenance and operations costs of lands within the lands portfolio. There are always maintenance and operations costs and responsibilities associated with owning or managing lands, and funds to support these expenses are rarely included with the purchase or lease funds. The long-term management responsibility and the funds to support the expense of maintenance and operations of Department lands must be identified before the lands are included in the lands portfolio.

Both ethics and state law require the Department of Fish and Wildlife to use its funding wisely. State law prevents public agencies from paying more than the appraised value of the property. This direction is an element of fiscal accountability, and also prevents public agencies from outbidding potential private buyers. The Department must also consider opportunities to generate revenue from the lands. When such opportunities are consistent with the fish and wildlife values of the land, revenue-generating activities can be an important source of maintenance and operations funds.

Stewardship

The Department of Fish and Wildlife has a responsibility to be a good steward of the lands within the lands portfolio. To be a good steward, the Department keeps the land functional and safe for the public, adds lands to the portfolio only when needed improvements or restoration are feasible and cost effective, and makes decisions that allow for effective and efficient management of the land. Proper stewardship includes identifying and managing physical or legal liabilities that exist on the property. Whether the liability is an abandoned mine shaft or an existing lien on the property, the agency seeks to avoid, reduce, or remedy liabilities.

Lands within the lands portfolio should contribute fish and wildlife values or related opportunities consistent with the goals and objectives of the agency. Where restoration or development improvements are necessary to realize these values and opportunities, the improvements must be feasible and cost effective. Land that already exists in its healthy, natural state, and already provides a high quality recreational opportunity is a more economical addition to the lands portfolio than land that needs significant enhancement or restoration.

A particular objective of the Department of Fish and Wildlife Strategic Plan is to provide sound sustainable operational management of agency lands, facilities and access sites (Objective 11). In order to meet this objective, it is necessary to make decisions that result in effective and efficient management of the land. Owning and managing contiguous or nearby lands means fewer time and staff resources must be used to maintain and operate the properties. Owning and managing lands that have similar maintenance and operations needs requires fewer types of equipment and staff expertise. The Department will strive to maintain a lands portfolio that includes the kind and amount of lands and facilities for which the agency can sustain high standards of maintenance and operations.

Partnership

The citizens of the state of Washington are both the support and the guides of the Department of Fish and Wildlife. The Department endeavors to be accountable to, and responsible for, the fish and wildlife related needs of the public. There is no better way to achieve this standard of operational excellence than by forming partnerships with citizens, organizations, tribes, and other agencies. Collaboration helps the Department to be a “good neighbor” and gain insight into, and support for, the design and maintenance of the lands portfolio.

In order to create and facilitate partnerships with others, the agency must reach out to local communities and establish open lines of communication. It is important to identify actual and potential sources of support and opposition for potential additions to the lands portfolio. Reaching out to local communities may include holding or attending public meetings; meeting with local governments; or distributing information to neighbors, communities, or organizations. Reaching out in this way opens the door to gaining the support of immediate neighbors and creating collaborative land management proposals with other entities.

Tools

A number of plans exist that can contribute toward forming and improving partnerships with other entities. Department of Fish and Wildlife advisory groups and other fish and wildlife constituency organizations are valuable partners, or can point land managers toward other potential partner organizations. Community members and neighbors to the land are valuable both as partners and as resources for identifying other partners. Additionally, existing partnerships with local governments, private landowners, or non-profit organizations may be expanded to include new lands and new activities. The opportunities for collaboration are nearly limitless, and are an incredible asset and shaping force for the Department of Fish and Wildlife’s lands portfolio.

Implementation

This articulation of the Department of Fish and Wildlife's lands vision is vital for upholding the responsibility, accountability, and outcomes that the public expects from the lands portfolio. Even more important, however, is the relationship of the lands vision to the daily operations of the Department. The real power of any guidance document is in its consistent implementation across regions and programs. This portion of the lands vision reports the tools and actions that are necessary to ensure that the lands vision and the attendant agency goals and needs become institutionalized in Department of Fish and Wildlife practice.

Lands Evaluation Matrix

The point of application for the lands vision report is decision-making regarding the lands portfolio. It is in the context of decisions about specific properties and management decisions that the lands vision will be upheld or set aside. An evaluation tool has been designed and included here in order to firmly connect lands portfolio decision-making to the goals and needs expressed in the report.

Format

The organization and components of the lands vision report provide the framework for the accompanying evaluation matrix. Agency goals and needs contribute toward fulfilling the Department of Fish and Wildlife's lands vision now and in the future. The agency goals provide the major evaluation categories, and the supporting agency needs provide further elaboration in each evaluation category. Individual evaluation criteria have been gleaned from the discussions of agency needs in earlier sections of this report. These criteria are arranged beneath each agency need, and provide a tangible means of discerning the degree to which a particular property contributes to that need. These criteria represent current understanding of society's fish and wildlife values and the responsibilities of the Department of Fish and Wildlife, and they should be revised as necessary to ensure a reflection of current understanding.

Some of the criteria have been separated and put into a category called "threshold information". The information that these criteria refer to is important enough for upholding the responsibility, accountability, and expected outcomes of the lands portfolio that it represents the threshold or doorway into the lands portfolio. The lands project sponsor must provide satisfactory answers to these criteria in order to proceed through the evaluation process. These criteria are important because of the valuable information that they deliver to the Department decision-makers. It is incumbent upon each decision-maker, or group thereof, to decide what a "satisfactory" answer is and to communicate this to project proponents.

A blank lands evaluation matrix and instructions for its use can be found in Appendix A.

Use

This evaluation tool, the lands evaluation matrix, was carefully designed to be used as an initial assessment of the degree to which a specific property contributes to the Department's vision, goals, and needs. The lands evaluation matrix should not be used to the exclusion of more specific evaluation and scrutiny. Rather, the evaluation matrix should serve as an *initial screen* of the fish and wildlife related values that a property can provide. It should be a high-level guide for Department of Fish and Wildlife decision-makers as they assess whether lands project proposals contribute to the fundamental tenets of the agency's lands vision and portfolio. In addition to guiding decision-making, the evaluation matrix preserves an important record of the initial values and uses associated with a particular investment in the Department's lands portfolio. As such, completed evaluation matrices should be shared among regions,

across programs, and between regional and headquarter staff. The lands evaluation matrix presents a practical way to improve communication regarding land management and ownership decisions.

The lands evaluation matrix should be used whenever and wherever decisions about the lands portfolio are made. Individuals inside and outside the Department of Fish and Wildlife should use it as a guide to the attributes a property must possess, as well as the kind of information that must be included with a lands project proposal. The Department's regional directors and regional management teams should use the matrix to evaluate whether particular lands project proposals contribute toward agency goals and needs. The matrix may also be used to assist in the comparison of one lands proposal to another. Department headquarters staff and executive management should use the matrix in similar ways. In general, the lands evaluation matrix is an initial screen for the consistency of a lands portfolio decision (whether an addition or divestment of lands) with the agency's lands vision, goals, and needs.

Policy and Procedures

To ensure further consistency, as well as consistent application, the Department of Fish and Wildlife intends to undertake the creation of a policy and procedures regarding the lands vision and lands evaluation matrix. These documents will describe in more detail the decision-making process for changes to the lands portfolio, including additions *and* divestments. It may be desirable, for instance, to create a Director's Office Land Committee to review lands decisions and assure consistency across regions and programs. It will more thoroughly guide the Department's employees with regard to the steps they must follow, and the permission they must obtain, in order to purchase land, enter into leases or other landowner agreements, or make other decisions regarding the lands portfolio.

Training

Training for Department of Fish and Wildlife staff at regional and program levels is an additional way to improve the consistency with which decisions about the lands portfolio are made. Specific training regarding the use of the evaluation matrix may be necessary, and could be supplemented by workshops regarding the subsequent policy and procedures. Because land management is a tool that is used across agency programs (i.e. fish, wildlife, habitat, and facilities), existing program procedures may need to be evaluated for consistency with the lands vision, lands evaluation matrix, and lands policy and procedures.

Measuring Success

The success of the lands portfolio in fulfilling the lands vision, and contributing to the Department of Fish and Wildlife's mission, goals, and needs, depends upon regular review of the particular land "investments" within. Lands within the portfolio must continue to contribute to the vision, and the lands evaluation matrix can be used to guide both additions to, and *divestments from*, the portfolio. Future, comprehensive reviews of Department of Fish and Wildlife lands will also use the evaluation matrix.

The success of the implementation of the vision, goals, and needs described here can also be assessed using specific performance measures. The extensions of the vision statement that are presented at the start of each chapter take the form of performance measures, and can be used to evaluate the progress the Department of Fish and Wildlife makes in implementing its lands vision.

Benefits to Fish and Wildlife

We have much yet to learn about the basic needs of many of Washington's fish and wildlife species, including many of those listed for state and federal protection. A better understanding of the habitat needs of these fish and wildlife populations is needed for a citizen-supported approach to habitat

protection. In turn, protecting lands across key habitats can assure Washington's rich natural heritage and biodiversity are maintained.

Our Vision for the Future:

- Basic needs, including key habitats, will be understood for species at risk;
- Wildlife-accessible habitats will exist that are sufficient to sustain species at risk, keep common species common, and assure adequate game populations;
- Each of the habitat types in Washington State will have sufficient acreage under some form of protection to assure properly functioning habitat.

Benefits to the Public

In Washington State's rapidly urbanizing society, it is increasingly important to assure that the State's traditional fish and wildlife values are shared by future generations in all areas of the state. These values can best be protected by providing all citizens access to fish and wildlife related opportunities and information, and by assuring, to the greatest extent practicable, that these opportunities benefit local and state economies.

Our Vision for the Future:

- All Washington citizens will have an opportunity to access and appreciate this state's fish and wildlife;
- Availability and access to fish and wildlife related opportunities will increase consistently with demand;
- All Washingtonians will have opportunity for a fish and wildlife educational experience;
- To the greatest extent practicable, agency lands will present a direct or indirect economic benefit to the local or state economy.

Operational Excellence

Protection of habitats and species through public ownership of lands has a history of controversy in Washington and across the nation. At the same time, Washington State has been a national leader in the protection of threatened and endangered species and their habitats, while balancing fish and wildlife related recreational and commercial opportunities. Resources available for public acquisition of lands must be spent strategically, with clearly identified goals and objectives. WDFW must demonstrate excellence in stewardship and partner with other public and private entities to maximize the benefits of lands investments.

Our Vision for the Future:

- Local interests and perspectives will be solicited and accommodated to the greatest extent possible for all proposed WDFW acquisitions;
- In addition to fee-simple acquisition by WDFW, management alternatives such as land preservation agreements, management agreements, and partnerships will be evaluated for all proposed agency acquisitions;
- WDFW identifies and aggressively pursues funding sources to support operations and maintenance for all agency lands, and to manage those lands for ecological health;

All potential WDFW lands acquisitions are evaluated based on their contribution towards the conservation of fish and wildlife and the provision of fish and wildlife related opportunities for the public.

Conclusion

This report, *Lands 20/20*, conveys the Department's vision for protecting our unique quality of life by maintaining a citizen-supported portfolio of lands to sustain Washington's diverse fish and wildlife and their habitats into the next century. Components of this vision connect the Department of Fish and Wildlife's land management and ownership to its legislative mandates and its strategic plan, and convey the particular ways in which maintaining public land helps the Department to meet those mandates. Vision statements include:

Basic needs, including key habitats, will be understood for species at risk;

Wildlife-accessible habitats will exist that are sufficient to sustain species at risk, keep common species common, and assure adequate game populations;

Each of the habitat types in Washington State will have sufficient acreage under some form of protection to assure properly functioning habitat;

All Washington citizens will have an opportunity to access and appreciate this state's fish and wildlife;

Availability and access to fish and wildlife related opportunities will increase consistently with demand;

All Washingtonians will have opportunity for a fish and wildlife educational experience;

To the greatest extent practicable, agency lands will present a direct or indirect economic benefit to the local or state economy;

Local interests and perspectives will be solicited and accommodated to the greatest extent possible for all proposed WDFW acquisitions;

In addition to fee-simple acquisition by WDFW, management alternatives such as land preservation agreements, management agreements, and partnerships will be evaluated for all proposed agency acquisitions;

WDFW identifies and aggressively pursues funding sources to support operations and maintenance for all agency lands, and to manage those lands for ecological health;

All potential WDFW lands acquisitions are evaluated based on their contribution towards the conservation of fish and wildlife and the provision of fish and wildlife related opportunities for the public.

This report represents an outline of our most fundamental values with respect to lands acquisition, ownership, and management. Implementation of this vision occurs at many scales, both within the agency and through inter-agency planning processes.

The Department's dual mandate (to protect fish and wildlife and related recreational opportunities) implies the use of multiple, sometimes conflicting, management strategies. It is in the development of issue- or species-specific plans that Department of Fish and Wildlife staff can work to reconcile management goals and land management approaches to best achieve the objectives for particular properties, species or habitats.

Finally, the changeable nature of society's values necessitates the periodic review of the vision and goals described in this document to ensure that our portfolio continues to reflect those values, as well as changing species status, agency activities and land use. In this way, the lands vision report is truly a living document, growing and changing to reflect the values and attitudes of the public the Department serves.

Appendix A

Land Transaction Evaluation Matrix

Lands 20/20: A Clear Vision For The Future. Protecting Our Unique Quality Of Life By Maintaining A Citizen-Supported Portfolio Of Lands To Sustain Washington's Diverse Fish And Wildlife And Their Habitats Into The Next Century.

THRESHOLD INFORMATION: The information below must be provided in sufficient detail in order for the evaluation to proceed.

1. **Planning Integration**

Please explain how this property is linked to the WDFW Strategic Plan; to a local, regional, state, national, or international plan or agreement that is consistent with WDFW goals and objectives; or to a mitigation settlement signed by the agency.

2. **Alternatives to Ownership**

Please explain why alternatives to WDFW ownership or management of this property (e.g. conservation provided through land use regulations, another entity holding title, or a conservation easement) are not appropriate.

3. **Maintenance and Operations**

What are the expected maintenance and operations costs associated with this property? How were these costs determined? Where will the funds to meet these costs come from? Who will manage the property over the long term?

4. **Local Involvement**

Name the entities that currently support this project, and explain why they support it.

Name the entities that are likely to support this project in the future, and explain why this support is likely.

Name the entities that currently oppose this project, and explain why they oppose it.

Name the entities that are likely to oppose this project in the future, and explain why this opposition is likely.

EVALUATION: Please evaluate the property using the criteria below.

GOALS	AGENCY NEEDS	CRITERIA	SCORE
Benefits To Fish & Wildlife			40 Points Possible
	Species		/ 20
		Necessary for Species Persistence (irreplaceable?)	
		Federal Endangered	
		Federal Threatened	

GOALS	AGENCY NEEDS	CRITERIA	SCORE
	Habitat	State Endangered (WDFW)	
		State Threatened (WDFW)	
		Federal Candidate	
		State Species of Concern	
		Locally Important/Ecoregional Assessment Target Species	
		(Ecosystem Context)	/ 10
		Protects Ecosystem Processes and Functions	
		Contributes to Landscape Integrity	
		Contributes to a Migratory or Connectivity Corridor	
		Contributes to Harvestable Fish and Wildlife Populations	
		Risk to Fish and Wildlife Value of Property	
	Biodiversity	/ 10	
		Species Richness	
		Complexity of Habitats	
		Conservation Priority in an Ecoregional Assessment	
Benefits to Fish and Wildlife Subtotal			/ 40
Benefits To The Public		40 Points Possible	
	Availability/ Accessibility		/ 25
		Hunting Opportunity	
		Fishing Opportunity	
		Wildlife Viewing Opportunity	
		Other Recreation Opportunity	
	Knowledge	Risk to Recreational Value of Property	
			/ 5
		Research & Monitoring	
	Economics	Environmental Education	
			/ 10
		Effect on Tribes & Local Governments	
		Effect on Local Enterprise	
Benefits to the Public Subtotal			/ 40
Operational Excellence		20 Points Possible	
Fiscal Accountability		/ 5	
	Revenue Generation		
Stewardship		/ 5	
	Liabilities Identified		

GOALS	AGENCY NEEDS	CRITERIA	SCORE
		Feasibility (Cost & feasibility of necessary restoration, facility construction, etc.)	
		Management Efficiency	
	Partnership		/ 10
		Outreach to Community	
		Support from Immediate Neighbors	
		Collaboration with Other Entities	
		Operational Excellence Subtotal	/ 20
		TOTAL SCORE	/ 100

Appendix B

WDFW Wildlife Areas

<i>WILDLIFE AREA</i>	<i>ACRES</i>	<i>COUNTY</i>	<i>FIRST ACQUISITION</i>
Chelan	27,812	Chelan	1965
Chief Joseph	41,312	Asotin	1962
Colockum	104,918	Chelan/Kittitas	1953
Columbia Basin	182,125	Grant/Adams	1952
Cowlitz	13,940	Lewis	1991
Klickitat	14,057	Klickitat	1948
Lake Terrell	2,687	Whatcom	1942
LT Murray	96,993	Kittitas	1966
Methow	34,017	Okanogan	1941
Oak Creek	41,586	Yakima/Kittitas	1940
Olympic	4,061	Grays Harbor	1952
Sagebrush Flat	8,616	Douglas	1991
Scatter Ck / S Puget Snd	4,730	Pierce/Thurston	1966
Scotch Creek	16,853	Okanogan	1991
Sherman Creek	9,941	Ferry/Pend Oreille	1948
Shillapoo	1,550	Clark	1952
Sinlahekin	16,024	Okanogan	1939
Skagit	13,136	Skagit/Snohomish	1948
Snoqualmie	2,031	King/Snohomish	1964
St. Helens	2,533	Cowlitz	1989
Sunnyside	11,052	Benton/Yakima	1947
Swanson Lakes	20,476	Lincoln	1990
Wells	9,962	Douglas	1968
Wenas	104,087	Yakima/Kittitas	1951
Wooten	16,492	Columbia/Garfield	1941
TOTAL	800,991*		

Updated to 12/31/2004 *does not include hatcheries, public access fishing sites or administrative sites

Appendix C

WDFW Land Ownership and Control by County

January 2005

COUNTY	ACRES OWNED	ACRES CONTROLLED	TOTAL ACRES MANAGED
ADAMS	1,150.60	1,972.52	3,123.12
ASOTIN	31,075.30	10,235.05	41,310.35
BENTON	5,808.00	0.10	5,808.10
CHELAN	28,254.93	9,701.10	37,956.03
CLALLAM	735.33	340.87	1,076.20
CLARK	2,949.78	24.43	2,974.21
COLUMBIA	10,832.20	881.50	11,713.70
COWLITZ	4,269.30	1,243.18	5,512.48
DOUGLAS	13,844.52	1,532.90	15,377.42
FERRY	6,902.20	1,202.81	8,105.01
FRANKLIN	1,774.20	6,538.68	8,312.88
GARFIELD	6,934.40	121.10	7,055.50
GRANT	39,168.20	143,204.93	182,373.13
GRAYS HARBOR	5,759.20	334.84	6,094.04
ISLAND	60.50	21.18	81.68
JEFFERSON	1,396.97	98.58	1,495.55
KING	1,192.72	89.65	1,282.37
KITSAP	1,062.50	28.40	1,090.90
KITTITAS	144,533.52	72,566.59	217,100.11
Klickitat	13,165.70	3,221.60	16,387.30
LEWIS	410.00	1,153.84	1,563.84
LINCOLN	19,197.60	1,307.02	20,504.62
MASON	1,111.62	105.25	1,216.87
OKANOGAN	64,869.41	13,436.73	78,306.14
PACIFIC	3,518.44	59.83	3,578.27
PEND OREILLE	745.70	257.05	1,002.75
PIERCE	3,557.17	100.86	3,658.03
SAN JUAN	226.40	0.00	226.40
SKAGIT	11,382.20	1,309.13	12,691.33
SKAMANIA	311.72	223.80	535.52
SNOHOMISH	2,511.70	462.57	2,974.27
SPOKANE	175.60	8.77	184.37
STEVENS	261.90	208.89	470.79
THURSTON	1,667.90	160.70	1,828.60
WAHIAKUM	247.90	57.23	305.13
WALLA WALLA	209.00	235.90	444.90
WHATCOM	2,859.60	1,003.44	3,863.04
WHITMAN	2,291.00	36.63	2,327.63
YAKIMA	75,898.25	44,620.66	120,518.91
GRAND TOTALS	512,323.18	318,108.31	830,431.49

Appendix D

2004 WDFW Payments In Lieu of Taxes & Assessments Paid to Counties

COUNTY	4/1/04 PILT ACRES	2004 PILT PAID	2004 ASSESSMENTS PAID	TOTAL PAID TO COUNTY in 2004
ADAMS	0.00	\$0.00	\$10,718.72	\$10,718.72
ASOTIN	29,277.88	\$22,297.61	\$0.00	\$22,297.61
BENTON	0.00	\$0.00	\$2,812.39	\$2,812.39
CHELAN	26,789.83	\$18,752.88	\$0.00	\$18,752.88
CLALLAM	0.00	\$0.00	\$1,204.41	\$1,204.41
CLARK	0.00	\$0.00	\$8,859.70	\$8,859.70
COLUMBIA	10,794.13	\$7,555.91	\$1,746.97	\$9,302.88
COWLITZ	0.00	\$0.00	\$834.82	\$834.82
DOUGLAS	0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
FERRY	6,866.13	\$6,781.33	\$705.10	\$7,486.43
FRANKLIN	0.00	\$0.00	\$19,424.52	\$19,424.52
GARFIELD	6,914.26	\$4,839.98	\$553.14	\$5,393.12
GRANT	39,076.00	\$37,443.16	\$24,148.17	\$61,591.33
GRAYS HARBOR	3,248.00	\$7,473.66	\$0.00	\$7,473.66
ISLAND	0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
JEFFERSON	0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
KING	0.00	\$0.00	\$20,825.50	\$20,825.50
KITSAP	0.00	\$0.00	\$1,064.80	\$1,064.80
KITTITAS	148,762.02	\$115,909.16	\$5,703.34	\$121,612.50
KLICKITAT	13,106.35	\$21,416.95	\$760.26	\$22,177.21
LEWIS	0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
LINCOLN	19,470.36	\$13,629.25	\$1,902.08	\$15,531.33
MASON	0.00	\$0.00	\$450.00	\$450.00
OKANOGAN	60,293.16	\$75,736.87	\$8,403.77	\$84,140.64
PACIFIC	0.00	\$0.00	\$333.80	\$333.80
PEND OREILLE	614.00	\$3,308.65	\$0.00	\$3,308.65
PIERCE	0.00	\$0.00	\$7,909.34	\$7,909.34
SAN JUAN	0.00	\$0.00	\$275.00	\$275.00
SKAGIT	0.00	\$0.00	\$25,157.40	\$25,157.40
SKAMANIA	0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
SNOHOMISH	0.00	\$0.00	\$10,735.78	\$10,735.78
SPOKANE	0.00	\$0.00	\$1,018.75	\$1,018.75
STEVENS	0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
THURSTON	1,131.00	\$5,107.61	\$11,451.18	\$16,558.79
WAHIAKUM	0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
WALLA WALLA	0.00	\$0.00	\$12.00	\$12.00
WHATCOM	0.00	\$0.00	\$69.24	\$69.24
WHITMAN	0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
YAKIMA	70,130.23	\$88,792.82	\$44,933.61	\$133,726.43
GRAND TOTALS	436,473.35	\$429,045.84	\$212,013.79	\$641,059.63